

2004 Annual Narrative

Staffing

<u>Permanent Full Time</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>EOD Date</u>
Jeffrey W. Haas, Refuge Manager	GS-13	09/09/2001
Patricia A. Nagel, Deputy Ref. Mgr.	GS-12	07/25/2004
Norma Lynn Kline*, Wildlife Biologist	GS-11	11/03/2002
Joyce E. Sliter, Office Assistant	GS-6	02/12/1989
Robert E. Battin, Maintenance Worker	WG-9	03/14/1977
Jeffrey S. Enlow, Maintenance Worker/LE	WG-8	01/13/2002
Donald E. Stover, Eng. Equip. Operator	WG-8	03/21/1993

*Norma Kline was away from the office from March – Sept. through a OWCP Claim. From Sept – Dec, she worked part time, and returned to full-time duty in Jan., 2005.

Student Temporary Employment Program:

Sarah J. Armstrong	GS-3	06/17/2001	06/14/2004
Stacey Armstrong	GS-1	06/01/2004	08/2004

Temporary Appointment: Luke Randall, Group Leader – YCC

YCC Enrollees: Justin M. Barker, Rebecca J. Schenberg, Lindsey M. McClellan, Mitch L. Vallieres

Details: Joe Fontaine, Biologist on temporary detail at Erie NWR, October-November, drafted a timber management proposal for Deer Run Overlook.

Volunteers:

Americorps Group – 8	Michael Anderson
John Burr	Joe Carder
Jherek Christy	Sara Donaldson (RV Camper Volunteer)
Jodie Fait	Ray Gerhart
Deidre Haas	Keith Jones
Matt Kaufman	Reid Larson
Jack Paluh	Brad Parker
Gerry Putt	James Quinn (RV Camper Volunteer)
Luke Randall	Gregg Rinkus
Sarah Sargent	Gary Sliter
John Tautin	Lew Walker

Biological Program

A group of Regional- and refuge-biologists and Refuge Supervisors visited Erie (and Montezuma, Missisquoi, and Iroquois NWRs) for a biological review. The review was a precursor to the group working together on habitat management plans (with portions in common, yet specific to each refuge). (Sept)

Contracted with Mark Lethaby (Erie) to do tadpole staging in preparation for a research study conducted by Chesapeake Bay Field Office staff, Fred Pinckney. The study is part of a nation

wide abnormal frog survey. Fred sampled frogs at McFadden Road, Pool C, MSU 20. (July)

Contracted with Chris Lundberg (Meadville) to do grassland breeding bird surveys, and the regional landbirds breeding bird survey. (April)

A third bald eagle nest was found on the refuge, near Pool 9. (The first nest was discovered near Sugar Lake in 1996, and the second on the Seneca Division in 2000.)

A Prescribed Burn Plan was developed, however, due to unsuitable weather conditions and lack of available staff, no fields were burned. Scheduled burns on fields NG-26 and NG-28 were cancelled due to nesting Canada geese.

Intern Matt Kaufman, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, inventoried invasive plant species on the refuge. He focused on Japanese Knotweed working with Crawford and Erie County conservation agencies. He also contacted refuge neighbors who own property invaded by the species.

Gary Sliter, volunteer, managed the bluebird nest boxes on the refuge with the assistance of Deidre Haas, volunteer. 75 fledglings.

Jim Murphy removed 10 nuisance beaver from refuge impoundments in 2004 at a cost of \$590: Reitz Pond – 3; Pool 7S – 5; and Pool 7N – 2.

A Special User Permit was issued to Mallori McDowell from Allegheny College. She examined land use around and upstream of the mussel beds located preciously in Muddy Creek.

A Special Use Permit was issued to Scott Wissinger and his students to sample invertebrates in pond and wetlands along McFadden Road and across from Union Cemetery.

A Special Use Permit was issued to Joe Isaac (Pulaski, PA) to conduct surveys for rare plants on the refuge.

A Special use Permit was issued to Ernst Conservation Seeds (Meadville, PA) to harvest woodgrass seed from Coopers Marsh.

Jeff Wagner from the Western PA Conservancy was issued a Special Use Permit to conduct surveys on the refuge as part of the Crawford County Natural Heritage Inventory effort. Especially interested in species of concern and exemplary natural communities.

Special Use Permit issued to Karen Felton (USFS, Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry) to survey two locations on the refuge to for ash species health (along Muddy Creek Holly Trail and Tsuga Trail)

Cooperative Farming

Seneca Division: Leigh Bowes, Bill Lenox, Ed Simcheck

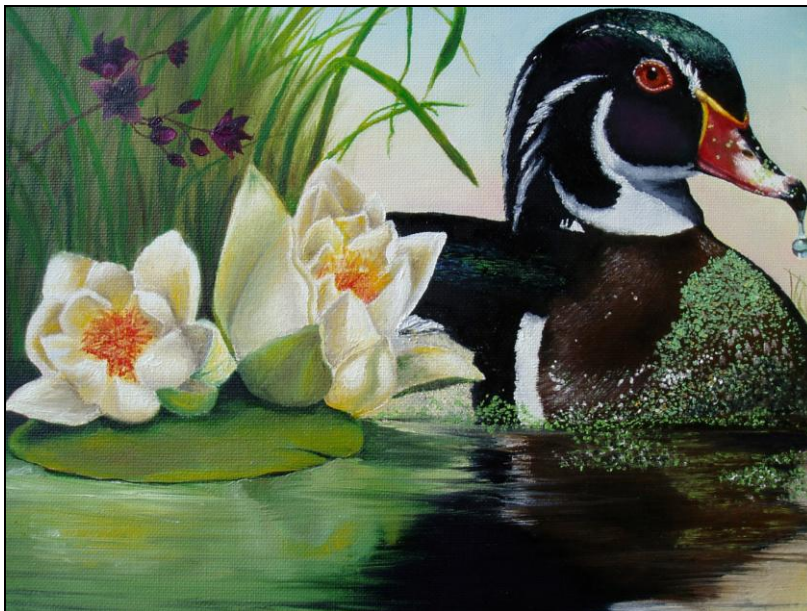
Sugar Lake Division: Jim Furry, Phil Parker, Jon Reese, Charlie Woolstrum

Land Acquisition

The Service acquired two parcels of land totaling 23.02 acres from Carol S. Thumm. The parcel on the north side of Johnstown Road borders French Creek in the Seneca Division (Rockdale Township). (March 24)

Interpretation & Education

Tressa Croce, a senior at Great Valley High School, designed a drake wood duck with water lilies for First Place, grades 10-12 and Best-of-Show. The refuge received 760 entries from students in kindergarten through twelfth grade, representing 35 public and private schools and two home school students. Judges for the Pennsylvania Contest were: Gerry Putt, Wildlife and Nature Artist; Joan Howlett, Research Ornithologist and Wildlife Artist; Jack Paluh, Wildlife Artist; Gregg Rinkus, Outdoor Writer and John Tautin, retired Chief, Department of Interior bird banding program.



Hunting & Fishing & Trapping

Trapping Units I and J were merged to one bidding unit in 2004. Refuge trapping units continued to be distributed according to the bid system. One unit is awarded to each high bidder and the bidder has exclusive rights to harvest furbearers on the assigned unit for the season. Bids from 13 trappers were opened and 13 units were awarded. Units E, F, and H were not awarded. Total revenue received was \$852.68. Harvest results: 155 muskrat (32 from Unit B), 77 raccoon (26 from Unit B), 17 mink (4 from Unit A), 48 beaver, 18 opossum, 4 red fox, 3 skunks, and 1 coyote. Unit K trapper did not submit a report. Unit M and N trappers each reported 0 harvest.

The third annual “Take Me Fishing” event for children was held May 29 at Pool K. Volunteer John Burr coordinated the event this year. Funds were provided through a Service Challenge

Cost Share in the amount of \$1,000. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission was a participating partner. The Commission presented a S.M.A.R.T. Angler Program. Many prizes were awarded during the day for the catch and release event.

Bear, fox, raccoon, and coyote hunting was permitted with a Refuge Special Use Permit. No other hunting permit was required. Hunters were notified (via a refuge brochure) that they needed to report, within 48 hours, the harvest of a deer, turkey, or bear..

Deer harvest information provided

Archery

Antlered -	4
Antlerless -	0

Flintlock

Antlered -	0
Antlerless -	3

Muzzleloader

Antlered -	1
Antlerless -	1

Rifle

Antlered -	4
Antlerless -	24

Turkey

Spring -	3
Fall -	3

Outreach/Publications

Crawford County Fair (August)

Pymatuning Waterfowl Festival (Sept.)

Updated fishing brochure and reprinted it. Added “The use or possession of live baitfish is prohibited on the Seneca Unit.” And “The taking or possessing of shellfish is prohibited on the Seneca Unit.”

Hunt brochure was reprinted without any substantive changes from the previous year.

Property/Purchases

Purchased a 2004 Chevrolet Tahoe for law enforcement to replace the 1996 Jeep Cherokee. Purchase price \$26,258.99. (April)

Purchased 2005 Mack Truck CL713 and trailer. I-480404. Traded in 1991 Ford 6x4 dump truck. (Sept.)

Transferred Custom TriAxle Trailer with air brakes to Ottawa NWR. Prop. No. 573888

Facilities

Erie NWR received \$4500 from Engineering/Safety Office for disposal of hazardous waste materials and to repair a fuel storage tank to be in compliance with the SPCC Plan.

The YCC enrollees constructed a new primitive trail, Trolley Line Trail, at the Seneca Division.

The refuge received \$180,679 for construction of an observation deck and rehabilitation of a portion of the Deer Run Trail for accessibility. (Work completed in 2005.)

As a result of major storms caused by the remnants of Hurricanes Francis and Ivan, Pool H received significant scouring of the parking lot entrance. Pool B Service Road became impassable. Both areas had repairs completed.

The boardwalk for the Pool K fishing pier was completed.

A fence was installed around the propane fuel tank behind the YCC Building.

Security Items for the Pool 9 water control structure were completed (fencing, gate).

The Pole Barn had overhead garage doors installed.

Travel & Training

Jeff Haas went to the Regional Office in Hadley, MA to provide a briefing to the Regional Directorate. (Nov.)

Jeff Haas went on a temporary detail to assist with the Athos I oil spill in Philadelphia. (Dec.)

Norma Kline attended training for the USGS R3/R5 Impoundment Study at John Heinz NWR (Dec.)

Misc.

A Cooperative Conservation Initiative grant from the Dept of the Interior for \$274,00 was awarded to the help restore the French Creek watershed. Partners specified in the grant included California University of Pennsylvania, Crawford County Conservation District, Ducks Unlimited, PA Dept of Environ. Protection, PA Game Commission, and Pheasants Forever. The grant was presented by the Assist Secretary of the Interior for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Craig Manson at a ceremony at the refuge.

The Pennsylvania Field Office (PAFO) acquired the necessary permits in December 2004 to make a stream correction in Kelly Run, Seneca Division. Kelly Run had left its streambed in the 1990s and began eating away at the property of Lewis Blystone, a refuge neighbor. It had left a chasm in his backyard measuring as wide as 20 feet, 130 feet long and up to six feet deep. The water had been diverted to the road ditch and threatened the integrity of Johnstown Road. The Department of Transportation had to rock line the road to save it. The project was completed under the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program that is designed to assist private property owners. Engineering Equipment Operator Don Stover operated the excavator. Larry Brannaka, FWS Hydrologist, engineered the stream to its original channel.

Compatibility Determinations were drafted, opened for public comment, and finalized for hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, trapping and natural resource collection.

Joyce Sliter received an Eagle Award (for unsung heroes) from the Regional Office. She, and manager Jeff Haas attended the awards ceremony in Hadley, MA. (October)

Climate

Erie National Wildlife Refuge – 2004				
Month	Temperatures*		Precipitation**	
	High	Low	Rain	Snow
January	59	-14	3.65	50.0
February	51	-12	0.9	4.5
March	68	25	4.12	17.5
April	80	21	3.14	.50
May	85	31	6.77	
June	88	37	5.63	
July	87	53	7.89	
August	85	40	5.93	
September	84	40	7.83	
October	74	31	2.96	
November	68	19	3.64	T
December	58	-2	3.10	21.0
		TOTALS	55.56	93.5

*Degrees Fahrenheit

**inches

Funding 2004

Refuge Operations	1261	462,919.00
Biological Studies	1261	9,595.00
Fishing Event	1261	2,000.00
YCC Camp	1261	21,935.00
Boulder Pond-DU	1261	
Annual Maintenance	1262	32,687.00
Headquarters electric	1262	90,852.00
Replace lowboy trailer	1262B5EE	
Replace S-10	1262	39,931.00
SAMMS implementation	1262	20,189.00
Pool 9 security	1262D5EE	27,566.00
Eagle protection	1262D5EE	36,000.00
Rehab pole building	1262D5EE	27,286.00
Junior Duck Program	4524	2,350.00
Challenge Grant-I&EE	6351	
RX, Pine Slash,	9263	5,000.00
Grasslands, training		

